

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Chemtool Fire - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region V

Subject: POLREP #8
Progress
Chemtool Fire
C5TM
Rockton, IL
Latitude: 42.4718011 Longitude: -89.0646749

To: Craig Thomas, EPA R5
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Lauren McCarrell, USEPA R5
Corey Peaslee, USEPA R5
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Sam Borries, U.S. EPA
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Matt Mankowski, U.S. EPA
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Francisco Arcaute, U.S. EPA

From: Craig Thomas, On-Scene Coordinator
Date: 6/23/2021
Reporting Period: 6/22/21 - 6/23/21

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	C5TM / Z5TK	Contract Number:	
D.O. Number:		Action Memo Date:	
Response Authority:	CERCLA	Response Type:	Emergency
Response Lead:	PRP	Incident Category:	Removal Action
NPL Status:	Non NPL	Operable Unit:	
Mobilization Date:	6/14/2021	Start Date:	6/14/2021
Demob Date:		Completion Date:	
CERCLIS ID:		RCRIS ID:	
ERNS No.:		State Notification:	6/14/2021
FPN#:	E21510	Reimbursable Account #:	

1.1.1 Incident Category

Emergency Response

1.1.2 Site Description

The site is located at the Chemtool Incorporated facility in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois. At approximately 07:00 on June 14th, several fire departments from Illinois and Wisconsin responded to a large, six-alarm fire at the facility. Chemtool Incorporated manufactures greases, additives, and other fluids. The facility has a storage capacity of over 4.7 million gallons of oil, and reportedly had over 1 million gallons of oil stored at the time of the fire. The facility quickly became fully-involved in the fire and had several explosions.

1.1.2.1 Location

The site is located at 1165 Prairie Hill Road in Rockton, Winnebago County, Illinois.

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

The facility housed several tanks of various greases, oils, additives, and other fluids, that have been or could

be consumed in the fire. The smoke plume and runoff from the fire threatens to release contaminants into the atmosphere, as well as potentially discharging the contents of the tanks to the Rock River.

Over a million gallons of crude oil were stored on the facility at the time of the fire. Several 50,000-gallon tanks containing an unknown amount of oil are still standing on the west side of the facility, which is approximately 700 feet from the Rock River. The tanks and the structural supports for the tanks were both impinged by fire for several hours up to a full day, which has caused both to show evidence of being in weakened states. At this time, due to the ongoing hot spots, Lubrizol has been unable to allow structural engineers in to the facility to assess the tanks and supporting structures. Also, until the tanks and structural supports can be assessed by a structural engineer, Lubrizol will be unable to determine the volumes of oil still present within the tanks. Given the potential large volume of oil in containers with compromised integrity, EPA believes there is substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway.

EPA observed pools of what appears to be viscous pure product as well as petroleum staining of soil in the wooded area immediately west of the facility, between the facility and Rock River. EPA START contractors collected samples of the pooled oil to be analyzed by the US Coast Guard Marine Safety Lab for oil fingerprint analyses.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

On-Scene Coordinators (OSC) Craig Thomas, Matt Villicana, Lauren McCarrell, and Corey Peaslee mobilized to the site on June 14, 2021. On June 14, 2021, at approximately 09:30 hours, EPA Region 5 Phone Duty Officer activated the Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) to respond to the incident. An additional OSC (Robert Kondreck) was deployed 6/16.

According to the Rockton Fire Chief and Potentially Responsible Party (PRP), the fire was discovered at approximately 0700 hours on June 14, 2021. The Rockton Fire Department, Rockford Fire Department, and several other Fire Departments from Illinois and Wisconsin Mutual Aid Box Alarm System (MABAS) responded to the incident to conduct fire suppression activities.

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

See Previous POLREPs for activities completed prior to this reporting period.

Lubrizol's current missions are to ensure that the fire is fully extinguished, prevent runoff from the site, and constructing a 5-foot tall clay berm to act as secondary containment for several 50,000-gallon tanks, containing an unknown amount of oil, that appear to be in weakened states.

On Tuesday, June 22, the following activities were conducted:

- Lubrizol industrial firefighting contractor continued to use heavy equipment to sift through debris in search of hot spots to extinguish and managing flare ups as they occur. Lubrizol reported four remaining hot spots at the morning operations briefings.
- Lubrizol environmental contractors continue to perform boom maintenance, fluid recovery with vacuum trucks, and runoff prevention activities. Lubrizol environmental contractors also started construction of a clay berm between the property fence line and Interceptor Trench 1. The purpose of the clay berm is to prevent a discharge of oil to the Rock River in the event one or more of the 50,000-gallon tanks containing unknown amounts of oil collapse.
- EPA START contractors continue to perform air monitoring for particulates (PM2.5 and PM10), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), hydrogen sulfide (H2S), hydrogen cyanide (HCN), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and methylene bisphenyl isocyanate (MDI). Stationary air monitoring was performed at three neighborhoods (North, South, and East). Mobile air monitoring was performed at seven locations around the fire location.
- EPA START contractors conducted oversight of environmental activities being conducted by Lubrizol contractors including: boom maintenance, runoff recovery, interceptor trench inspections, and clay berm construction.
- EPA START contractors collected samples from five frac tanks to be analyzed for PFAS, VOCs, SVOCs, metals, pH, and flashpoint.
- EPA received preliminary results from debris samples that were analyzed for asbestos by polarized light microscopy (PLM), which indicated that asbestos was not present in the debris released by the fire into the nearby neighborhoods.

On Wednesday, June 23, the following activities were conducted:

- Lubrizol industrial firefighting contractor continued to use heavy equipment to sift through debris in search of hot spots to extinguish and managing flare ups as they occur. Lubrizol reported two remaining hot spots at the morning operations briefing.
- Lubrizol environmental contractors continue to perform boom maintenance, fluid recovery with vacuum trucks, and runoff prevention activities. Lubrizol environmental contractors continued construction of the clay berm between the property fence line and Interceptor Trench 1.
- EPA START contractors continue to perform air monitoring for particulates (PM2.5 and PM10), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), hydrogen sulfide (H2S), hydrogen cyanide (HCN), sulfur dioxide (SO2), and methylene bisphenyl isocyanate (MDI). Stationary air monitoring was performed at three neighborhoods (North, South, and East). Mobile air monitoring was performed at seven locations around the fire location.
- EPA START contractors conducted oversight of environmental activities being conducted by Lubrizol contractors including: boom maintenance, runoff recovery, interceptor trench inspections, and clay berm construction.

2.1.3 Enforcement Activities, Identity of Potentially Responsible Parties (PRPs)

The RP has been identified as Chemtool Incorporated who is owned by Lubrizol.

2.1.4 Progress Metrics

Waste Stream	Medium	Quantity	Manifest #	Treatment	Disposal

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

Lubrizol industrial firefighting contractors will continue to sift through the debris in search of hot spots and extinguish them.

Lubrizol environmental contractors will continue to perform boom maintenance, fluid recovery with vacuum trucks, and other runoff prevention activities including construction of the clay berm on the west side of the building. The dimensions of the clay berm being constructed are 250 feet in length, 50 feet wide, and 6 feet tall.

USEPA START contractors will continue to provide 24-hour air monitoring support during the response while fire suppression activities are ongoing.

USEPA START contractors will also continue to provide oversight of environmental tasks including: boom maintenance, runoff recovery, and construction of the clay berm that will serve as secondary containment for the 50,000-gallon tanks containing unknown amounts of oil.

USEPA START contractors also remain prepared to monitor and collect samples from the Rock River, if sheening or any other evidence of a discharge is observed.

2.2.2 Issues

No issues occurred during this reporting period.

2.3 Logistics Section

No information available at this time.

2.4 Finance Section

2.4.1 Narrative

On 6/16/2021, U.S. EPA requested an FPN (E21510) to address the substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway. U.S. EPA began charging 75% to CERCLA and 25% to the FPN starting 6/16.

For 6/23/21, U.S. EPA spent approximately 3.5 hours of an approximately 13 hour work day providing oversight of controls addressing the substantial threat of discharge of oil to a navigable waterway at the ChemTool facility.

Estimated Costs *

	Budgeted	Total To Date	Remaining	% Remaining
Extramural Costs				
START	\$250,000.00	\$210,000.00	\$40,000.00	16.00%
Intramural Costs				
USEPA - Direct	\$30,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$6,000.00	20.00%
Total Site Costs	\$280,000.00	\$234,000.00	\$46,000.00	16.43%

* The above accounting of expenditures is an estimate based on figures known to the OSC at the time this report was written. The OSC does not necessarily receive specific figures on final payments made to any contractor(s). Other financial data which the OSC must rely upon may not be entirely up-to-date. The cost accounting provided in this report does not necessarily represent an exact monetary figure which the government may include in any claim for cost recovery.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer

The Lubrizol Fire department contractors are providing a safety officer

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

Francisco Arcout is fulfilling this role.

2.5.3 Information Officer

EPA has a Public Information Officer established for this response

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Unified Command

3.2 Cooperating Agencies

EPA Region 5

Illinois EPA

Illinois Emergency Management Agency

Illinois Department of Public Health

Occupational Safety and Health Administration

US Chemical Safety Board

4. Personnel On Site

EPA -2
START -12
Illinois EPA -3
Lubrizol
US Fire Pump
Hepaco
Environmental Restoration
Clean Harbors
CTEH
EH Solutions

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report

response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire

6.2 Reporting Schedule

It is anticipated that POLREPS will be provided at 24-hour intervals

7. Situational Reference Materials

response.epa.gov/chemtoolfire



